

sprawl problem that these environmental extremists are always attacking. Yes, they are the very ones that are causing it.

I can tell my colleagues, private property, while most people do not think about it, it is one of the main things that helped create the prosperity of this country. It is one of the great foundation stones, knowledge of our freedom, but of the prosperity that we have had in this country.

Any one who does not understand this, I wish they would read a book called *The Noblest Triumph, Property and Prosperity Through the Ages* by Tom Bethell. The whole book is important, but a couple of brief excerpts. He wrote, "Leon Trotsky, a leading Communist, long ago pointed out that where there is no private ownership, individuals can be bent to the will of the state under threat of starvation. The Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman has said that 'You cannot have a free society without private property' . . . Recent immigrants have been delighted to find that you can buy property in the United States without paying bribes."

"The call for secure property rights in Third World countries today is not an attempt to help the rich. It is not the property of those who have access to Swiss bank accounts that needs to be protected. It is the small and insecure possessions of the poor."

"This key point was well understood (by) Pope Leo XIII (who) wrote that the 'fundamental principle of Socialism, which would make all possessions public property, is to be utterly rejected because it injures the very ones whom it seeks to help.'"

What we have been saying all night here tonight is some of these liberals and left wingers claim to be the friend of the little guy, yet all of these things that they do end up hurting the small businesses and the small farmers and the little guy most of all.

Over the years, when private property has been taken by government, it most often has been taken from lower- and middle-income people and from poor or small farmers. So it is like all these industrial parks that are created. We do not need any more industrial parks in this country. We take land from poor farmers and then turn it over to these big multinational corporations for free or very reduced costs.

Then when we have all of these Federal projects, agencies in my area, for instance, have taken twice the amount of land that they needed to take for their project. It has been a very sad thing to see. But if we allow more and more land to be taken, then we are going to ultimately destroy the freedom that we have in this country and the prosperity that we have in this country. It will be a sad day if we continue to allow that to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. LEWIS) for any final comments that he wishes to make.

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. There has been a lot of polling data over the years; and the question is, would you prefer clean water as opposed to more oil exploration or clean air as opposed to more increased utility power companies? When one asks that question, of course we all want clean air. We all want clean water. We all want safe working conditions.

But the question should have been asked, do you want to be able to have your automobile? Do you want to be able to have reasonable prices for your energy? Do you want to have the living standards and conditions that you are used to? Do you want running water in your home? Do you want to be able to flip a switch and get the lights to come on? The American people want that.

I think as we are seeing in California today, they are in danger of losing the ability to flip a switch and have their electricity. They are in danger of having hot water because they do not have their hot water tanks generating heat.

So there is going to be some dire consequences to the extreme position that these environmentalists have taken over the last many years and put the American people in a very tough situation if this continues.

That is why we need to start turning it around now. Yes, continue to work very hard to use the technology and to create new technologies to make sure that, yes, when we explore and when we drill for oil, that the environment is protected; yes, that when we use coal, that it is burned cleanly and efficiently so that the environment is protected like it is being done now, natural gas, so forth.

Yes, we want those things. But these extremists, they have a Walden Pond mentality. They want to go out by Walden Pond and give up all, evidently, the conveniences that our forefathers have provided for us, that my father worked hard to provide for his family and on back. They want, for some reason, to think that that is evil to be able to have the standard of living that we have today because it is going to destroy planet Earth.

Well, the reality is that we are not going to destroy planet Earth. We do have the technology. We do have the opportunities to provide the energy resources that the people of this country need and do it in the right way, the environmentally correct way. But get rid of the extremism and make sure that we are not going to sacrifice the workers of this country and their jobs and take away from their families.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, let me just say very quickly in summing up. One example that I wanted to mention was President Bush has been hit real

hard on the arsenic in the water, yet one water district in Illinois said, if we went to those unrealistic standards that former President Clinton advocated, their water bills would have to go up \$72 a month.

So what we are saying is we need some balance and moderation brought back into our environmental policies. We cannot keep going along with wealthy environmental extremists who are not hurt when water bills go up \$40 or \$50 a month or gas prices go up to \$3 a gallon or utility bills double. But millions of people throughout this country are hurt if we have to do all of that.

We do not need to shut this country down economically and continue to hurt worse the poor and the lower-income and the working people and the middle-income in this country by forcing more jobs to leave to go to other countries and forcing people to reduce their standard of living by at least a third, as some of these policies would mean, because it is totally unnecessary. Then we would not be able to do the good things for the environment that we all want to do.

So we just need some balance and moderation brought back into these environmental policies.

I thank the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. LEWIS), my friend, for taking time out from his busy schedule to be with me here tonight to discuss these very important issues.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we have had the first hour discussing issues that relate to energy and the current situation. Some would label it a crisis. I must say that I listened to my esteemed colleagues from the other side of the aisle, but I guess I would take a slightly different tact in terms of the situation we face and the opportunities for improving it.

Having a dependable supply of energy and using it wisely is clearly critical for a livable community. But the current controversy surrounding energy ought to be an example where we can come together and make a difference, where this Congress and this administration can give thoughtful consideration to the impact that energy decisions can have on the livability of our communities and develop a more rational approach to energy utilization.

Now, unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle, the President, his chief spokesperson, and most recently, Vice President CHENEY are setting up a false policy conflict for the American public. This has nothing to

do with cutting back on the American quality of life, throwing vast numbers of people out of work.

They would like us to believe that somehow being more thoughtful about the use of energy and the Federal Government's role in promoting a better approach is somehow an assault on the American way of life. Nothing could be further from the truth.

America works best when we give people choices so that they can determine what works best for them. What choice do our friends in California have today paying far more for energy using far less when energy supplies are actually in pretty strong condition? We are going to hear from one of my colleagues tonight from California discussing that situation in greater length.

A country that disregards the value of conservation, that ignores fuel efficiency for automobiles, that seeks to maximize production at the expense of environmental quality is not protecting the American way of life, nor is it doing American families or business any favors.

With all due respect to the Vice President, he got it exactly wrong. Energy conservation is not just a matter of personal virtue. But even if it was, there is nothing wrong with formulating energy policy that recognizes the importance of this virtue.

□ 2030

Energy conservation should be the foundation of our national policy, not belittled by our national leaders.

Now, luckily, the Vice President and the President have been backing away from that for the last couple of days, and maybe we are going to get some positive recommendations from them; but the fact remains that it is the only way we will provide significant amounts of additional energy in the near term, not the proposal to go nuclear, not the proposal to build a power plant a week.

Energy conservation is an approach that has already been proven to be effective and has received, when we get a chance to deal with it here on the floor of this Chamber, broad bipartisan support. All the hotly debated talk about drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge is not going to alleviate problems facing the consumers now. Indeed, the administration has proposed cutting the budget for energy conservation. We need a set of policies that actually encourages it.

Tonight we are going to discuss some of these elements, because there are simple, energy-efficient conservation methods that we can be taking today. In my State of Oregon, like 10 other States, there is a bottle bill. Aluminum-can recycling saves 95 percent of the energy needed to make aluminum from bauxite ore. Energy savings in 1993 alone was enough to light

up a city the size of Pittsburgh for 6 years.

Now, let me bring this down to a more tangible example. The energy saved from recycling one aluminum can will operate a home computer for 3 hours. Energy saved from recycling one glass bottle will operate a 100 watt light bulb for 4 hours. Recycling seven soup cans saves enough energy to operate a 60 watt bulb for 26 hours.

There was talk from the other side of the aisle about somehow taking cars away from the American public. That is ludicrous. That is not the issue. We are talking about extending fuel-efficiency standards so that the 40 percent of oil that is used by cars and light trucks goes further. Switching from driving an average new car to a 13-mile-per-gallon SUV for 1 year is the equivalent of leaving your refrigerator door open for 6 years. And it has been discussed at great length. The notion of just improving the fuel standards for SUVs three miles per gallon will more than offset the amount of energy that we could hope to extract from the wildlife refuge, which the American public does not want us to invade; and it will get that energy to us quicker.

We are going to discuss this evening issues that relate to energy conservation with building standards. If we simply change the color of a roof to a light color, it will reflect the heat rays and lower home temperatures by as much as 5 degrees.

We have issues that we are going to be discussing this evening in terms of dealing with higher standards for energy-guzzling appliances. Rather than rolling back the standards that would improve these efficiencies that are improved by the last administration, we ought to maintain them.

We have, today, an opportunity to move forward and make a difference. And, sadly, it is my friends on the other side of the aisle and the Republican administration that are out of step with the American public. In Monday's poll in USA Today, an overwhelming majority of Americans favored conservation over drilling in the ANWR or moving in other directions. The American public understands that that will make a huge difference.

Mr. Speaker, I would like, if I could, to turn to my colleague from California, who has had some firsthand experience in the impacts that this has. We are going to have a spirited discussion. We have a number of colleagues, but I would like to turn the first 3 or 4 minutes of our discussion over to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), who can talk a little bit about the perspective of what we are facing in the State of California and what we ought to be doing to help this country.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon, who has a distinguished record on trying to move our policies toward livable commu-

nities and sustainable approaches to energy and to the quality of life.

I am from California, and that is ground zero for a crisis. But rather than focus on the long term, because the gentleman has, I think, illuminated that rather well, I want to focus on the short term.

We are told that what California is suffering now is somehow our own fault; that energy companies wanted to build power plants in our State, were desperate, knew how profitable it would be, and we just would not let them because we are so concerned about the environment. Nothing could be a bigger lie.

First, private industry did not particularly want to build power plants in California because they did not think they would make big money. When they bought the plants, they bought them for rather modest prices. And if they were desperate to build new ones, they certainly would have paid a premium for old ones. They were not trying to build new ones, and they did not pay very much for the old ones. They did not realize, until they lucked into it, that energy would be tight enough in California so that they could gouge the California consumer; that what looked like a modest investment in a State that could produce enough electricity to meet its needs would turn into a gold mine of gouging not because of actual shortages but because of a new concept in electric power called "closed for maintenance."

We have seen in each of the last 8 months double or triple the amount of capacity "closed for maintenance" than in that same month 12 years ago. Closed for maintenance means closed to maintain an ungodly price for each kilowatt.

And so just to prove that there was not some intense desire to build power plants in California somehow stopped by these environmental extremists we are tagged with, reflect on the fact that California is not by itself an energy market. Each of the adjoining States, particularly Nevada and Arizona, are part of that energy market. And so if there is a plant built in Arizona or Nevada, those plants can sell into California. The electrons really do not know when they are coming to a State boundary.

So if industry was desperate to build power plants to supply California, they could have built them in California, Arizona, Nevada, or Oregon. They chose not to, until quite recently. What they chose to do instead was to operate the old power plants, close a few for maintenance, and make a fortune on each kilowatt.

In 1999, we paid \$7 billion for our electricity in California. The next year, the year 2000, we actually used less electricity at peak times, and they charged us \$32.5 billion. This year we will not use more electricity; but we will be

paying 50, 60, or perhaps even \$70 billion for the same electrons that we were paying \$7 billion for just a couple years ago.

The answer to this crisis is here in Washington. Now, we are told that California should not expect a bailout. I do not want one penny from any of the States represented here. There are some programs to help out a few people in California, and those are wonderful programs; but we do not need a single penny. All we need is to regulate on a fair basis, with generous profits for the power plants in California.

Now, we are told that California should solve the problem ourselves. Why are we not self-reliant? We are bound and gagged with Federal rope spun out of the White House. Federal law prevents us from regulating the price of electricity from these plants. And so we can almost hear the muffled laughter from the White House as Federal law ties us up, the White House prevents this Congress from untying us, and they can laugh at California and say It's all your fault.

A White House that cared about fairness would reinstitute the same policies that we have had in the electric industry for over 100 years and that built this country, and for at least a couple of years more have rates based on costs, with fair profit to those generating electricity in the West. Until that happens, we will have an artificial crisis, transferring billions and tens of billions in wealth from all the people of California to a few megacorporations, which just happen to be based in Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's forceful explanation this evening, and he is one who has been a tireless advocate for trying to shine a spotlight on the situation in California. I really appreciate his focusing on what has happened to a State over the last couple of years that is actually using less energy, that is working on conservation, and is paying a terrible price, multiple, multiple times what they paid just 2 years ago.

The gentleman's tireless advocacy is extraordinarily useful in helping us understand this situation.

Mr. SHERMAN. If I can have just a couple of seconds, I would like to point out that per capita California uses less electricity than any State except Rhode Island. And in a couple of months, we will be number one in minimizing our use of electricity among all 50 States. This rape of California is not justified.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I thank the gentleman for that clarification.

I would now, if I could, turn to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), who has been a tireless champion on this floor dealing with issues of the environment generally and I know has a special interest in

areas that affect energy conservation, the use of energy; and I yield to him at this time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Oregon. I said last night when we had some of our Democratic colleagues doing a Special Order on energy that we would continue to make the point every night if necessary, and I want to thank my colleague from Oregon for continuing that tonight.

We know that tomorrow President Bush is expected to unveil his energy package. We have gotten some indication, even though he has this secret task force with Vice President Cheney, and they do not really tell us, they do not reveal what they are doing, they do it behind closed doors; but we have had some indication of what they are going to suggest tomorrow. From all indications, the Bush-Cheney energy plan that has been developed in secret is basically pro-drilling, pro-nuclear, anti-consumer, and as the gentleman from Oregon has so well mentioned, anti-environment.

I have had a number of my constituents say to me, well, why is Bush so anti-environment? Why is the President this way? Why is he leaving the issue of what kind of an energy policy we should have primarily to the oil companies and the oil interests? And the answer is that he and the Vice President are captive. They are the oil companies. They are the oil interests. They are the special interests.

We know that big oil gave \$3.2 million to the Bush campaign and \$25.6 million to Republicans overall; and other sectors of the energy industry have been similarly generous. Apparently, tomorrow is payback time to the energy industry, and I am afraid that consumers and the environment are going to suffer for it.

I do not say that because I am trying to be cute. As the gentleman knows and he mentioned, and the gentleman is the champion of the livable communities issue, which is so important in my home State of New Jersey as it is in Oregon and around the country, people care about the environment. People do not want drilling at the expense of the environment.

□ 2045

But what we are getting is drilling in ANWR, in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. Further, the Bush administration seems to have decided to move forward with offshore oil and gas leases in the Gulf of Mexico, even rejecting an appeal from the President's brother, who is the Governor of Florida. President Bush has suggested drilling for oil in national monuments. He told that to the Denver Post.

We are getting the oil and gas companies running the show. He wants to drill, build new plants. Not that we should not, but I do not know that we

need as many as he is suggesting. He does not seem to want to do anything about what my colleague from California and his constituents face, the problems they face right now. He has rejected, as the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) knows, the idea of any wholesale price caps which, from what I can see, are the best way to address the near-term problem in California and western States.

He said that he does not want to do anything about OPEC. He is not going to ask them to increase production. He said it is not good policy to ask. He says that he does not want to use the SPR, the strategic petroleum reserve, to control prices. He does not seem to have any concern about the immediate problem of gasoline prices.

Mr. Speaker, we are at \$1.72 in my district now, but I understand in California we are over \$2. I would not be surprised to see \$2.50 or \$3 a gallon in the next few weeks.

The Democrats unveiled through our energy task force on Monday their proposal. Lo and behold, the Democrats not only want to deal with long-term energy efficiency and provide tax credits for people who buy a car or a home that provide for energy or fuel efficiency, but we want to put an end to the price gouging. We are saying, go to OPEC and demand that they increase production so that prices come down. Use the SPR as President Clinton and the previous President, the father, did before President Clinton. Instruct the Department of Justice to investigate to ensure that illegal price-fixing does not occur, and have FERC impose wholesale price caps so we do not continue to have the blackouts.

Mr. Speaker, we passed this tax reconciliation bill and this tax cut, which I opposed and most Democrats opposed. President Bush is saying, we will give you a tax refund and you can take that tax refund and pay the higher prices for gasoline at the pump. Well, I have never heard anything so ridiculous in my life. Now I am going to feed the oil industry with my tax refund, which is probably going to be very limited if I am middle income. But I am supposed to take that and give it to the oil companies so they can continue to make huge profits and continue to pay the Bush-Cheney campaign expenses. Hopefully, someday everybody will wake up and realize what an outrage this is.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments; and I was particularly struck by something that the gentleman said at the outset, because the gentleman was here in Congress when there was a big uproar because the First Lady had a secret committee examining health care costs and ways to bring it down.

My recollection is that people on the other side of the aisle were outraged that there would be these discussions about a public policy issue and not be

open to the public. And it seems to me that you make an extremely valid point that all these discussions now have been in secret, with a very limited cross-section of people excluding the broad range of interests, and now it is going to be inflicted upon us. It seems to me a certain amount of inconsistency.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, then-Candidate Bush said at the time when heating oil prices were soaring in my State, he said, "What I think the President ought to do is get on the phone with the OPEC cartel and say, we expect you to open your spigots."

Now he says that he does not want to talk to the cartel. I think Secretary Abraham was saying that it was sort of degrading to the United States to have to go to OPEC and ask them to open the spigots. He might feel degraded, but my constituents would like him to go to the OPEC countries, some of whom we have saved their very existence, and ask them to open their spigots.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I turn to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), my colleague from the Seattle area who has been an advocate and concerned citizen dealing with these issues. We have had a tremendous impact in the State of Washington, and I know the gentleman has been a leader here in bringing people from the West and the West Coast to deal with these impacts.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the gentleman would like to make a few comments from his unique perspective. Maybe California thinks that they are ground zero, but there are those of us who feel we are getting a few of the after-shocks.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. I would like to pick up on the gentleman from New Jersey's comment about this really ludicrous idea put forward by the President that his tax cut bill is a solution to the gouging of prices that we face in California, both for gasoline and electricity.

First, the idea of giving people their tax money back so they can give it to the energy and oil companies, that strikes me as so inefficient. Why does he not have the courage of his convictions and simply ask the American taxpayer to send the money directly from the Federal Treasury to the oil companies? As the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) pointed out, a portion of that money to the oil companies will go to the Republican Party, so you can send a portion of the surplus to the Republican Party and the bulk to the energy companies.

The second thing to point out is as working Californians are paying \$2.10 for regular gasoline, as they are paying

double and triple the electric bills, if you say a single mother in California with a couple of kids, an income of \$20,000, how much money does she get out of this tax cut? Zero. So she still pays the \$2.10 a gallon. She still pays double or triple the electric bill, and she gets nothing from the tax cut.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments. I was in a town hall meeting the other day, and I had a constituent that sort of suggested that it would have been simpler just to cut out the middleman of giving us any tax break at all when it goes right to the oil companies. He said it reminded him of a money laundering scheme. I do not think that is too far off the mark.

Mr. Speaker, I have a message for the rest of the United States, and that is it is not just California. And it is coming to you in your neighborhood, because it is in Oregon and it is in Washington now. It may have started in California, but right now in the State of Washington, we are suffering potentially 43,000 people losing their jobs. Mr. Speaker, as a result of these oil companies and generating companies increasing their prices, not twice, not 5 times, not 10 times, but on the wholesale spot market for electricity right now in the State of Washington, these companies have increased their price 1,000 percent, 2,000 percent, without spending another dime to generate one single electron. These are windfall profits that people are enjoying right now at our expense. Forty-three thousand families out of work because these folks have a callous indifference to the economy of Washington, Oregon, California and, soon, whatever State you are in. This is coming to you because they have figured out a way to game this system starting in the West.

Mr. Speaker, what we Democrats have proposed is a short-term solution. We need a long-term solution, but we have to have some short-term solution to this. Unfortunately, the President, what has he decided to do? What has his message been to America? Go fish. You are on your own. We do not have any short-term solution. We are not going to do anything.

Mr. Speaker, we have suggested a couple of things. Number one, that he call FERC, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and he ask them to impose a 2-year cost-based pricing system for wholesale prices for the western grid of the United States. We are asking a simple thing: that the companies for the next 2 years get their costs and a reasonable degree of profit, and pick the highest degree of profit, it will still be half of what they are charging today.

When they have increased their prices 1,000 percent; like if you bought a car for \$30,000, it now costs you \$300,000 to \$600,000, if Detroit did the business the way that the generators are doing right now.

We are asking for a time-out on this ludicrous explosion of prices. People have said, will this not decrease the supply of electricity? Hogwash. If anything, it will increase it. These companies have figured out how to reduce supply and drive the price up. Fully one-third of all of the generating capacity in California in the last 4 months has been turned off, and they have driven these prices sky high.

Mr. Speaker, we have asked the administration for simple relief. They have refused it, and they give us no simple relief.

I want to say that there is good news in the long term and short term when it comes to conservation and efficiency. We should be optimistic. There are plenty of causes for this country to be as optimistic as we were when we decided to go to the Moon, and there were naysayers then too about new technology. But there is just as good news for us from a technological basis for wind, solar, new transmission, fuel cells, as there was for new technologies which took us to the Moon.

For example, in Seattle right now, there is a company called MagnaDrive. MagnaDrive is manufacturing a coupling device based upon, as you can guess, magnetism, which basically has two plates which act as a coupling for electric motors. This device can save 30 to 40 percent of the electricity to drive an electric motor. It is just starting to develop a market. We need to recognize technologies like MagnaDrive and recognize their potential. That is the good news.

The bad news is that some of these technologies are being developed not in America, because we have not given them the incentives for the development of these. For example, hybrid cars, electric gasoline-powered cars. The one on the road right now is from Japan. Why should America give up this market to the Japanese manufacturers? Why should we give up this potential development of jobs to those manufacturers?

Mr. Speaker, I think this Nation ought to be confident enough in our technological ability to say we are going to lead the Nation in new car technology. Yet in that very specific field, the President's budget has gone backwards. We ought to lead the Nation in efficiency and conservation. If we stand up to Mr. CHENEY's short-sighted statement that conservation is just a personal ethic but does not have anything to do with sound economic policy, he is dead wrong. Efficiency is a personal virtue, and it is an economic virtue, and it is a job-growth strategy that this country ought to use.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I am proud that the Democratic Party has come up with a comprehensive plan to combine conservation and short-term price mitigation. It is a short-term solution

and a long-term solution, and I appreciate the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) bringing us here tonight.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we also have been joined by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), who has had lots of practical experience from a State that has dealt in the past with energy problems. I know that from leadership as the Senate president of the great State of Connecticut, he has had a chance to navigate these rocky shoals before, and I am honored that the gentleman joins us for this discussion.

□ 2100

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman and also recognize that the current Speaker also hails from the great State of Connecticut and is doing an outstanding job.

I want to applaud the gentleman from Oregon for his leadership in every aspect here in the Congress as relates to our environment most notably, as was pointed out by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), in the area of livable communities but also in recognizing the need to make sure that a core component of any energy plan has got to be conservation, that overall the number of examples that he put forward, if followed, should serve as the cornerstone to any policy moving forward.

I also join with my colleagues from California and the Northwest as well and not only sympathize but empathize with the problems that they currently face and understand that today it may be California but tomorrow it could be Connecticut. And so as a Nation, we must pull together and make sure that we are enacting sound public policy.

The fact of the matter is that there are a lot of fingers that could be pointed and a lot of blame that could be distributed, but for a number of years, several different White Houses and Congresses have not addressed this issue the way that it should be tackled. I believe that first and foremost and piggybacking on the comments of the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), that we need to lay out a strategy that has an end goal.

I suggest that we start that end goal by saying we will be independent of foreign oil resources within a 10-year period and that we should instruct the Department of Energy to devise a strategic plan that will take us there. The process of attaining that goal is much like establishing putting a man on the Moon as the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) was alluding to.

When you establish a goal for yourself and then set out to achieve that goal, you can accomplish great things. It seems to me pretty clear that along with conservation, along with renewable resources and assorted other policies that we must pursue, we must above all else have a specific goal.

When you consider that in 1999 the cost of importing oil from abroad was \$60 billion and now that is estimated to be something closer to \$100 billion in cost, that money could be better spent at developing alternative energy sources. Specifically, I feel that the energy systems of the future and most notably fuel cells hold the key to provide us with both the power and efficiency we need to get 60 to 80 miles per gallon out of an SUV and also the by-product of which is vapor that is clean.

This kind of environmentally sound policy, this kind of energy alternative is exactly the kind of can-do spirit that took us to the Moon. And what got us to the Moon frankly were spacecraft that were powered by fuel cells. If we can go to the Moon and go on to Mars, certainly we can get to and from work. Later this month, I hope to bring an SUV to the Capitol and encourage everyone to drive that automobile powered by fuel cells to see its efficiency, to see how this actually works and the cutting edge technology, which in combination with conservation is the path for us to go down.

I applaud my Democratic colleagues for the initiative they took in the press conference the other day. These are the concerns that the American people long for us to address. We need bipartisan cooperation. We do not need committees that meet in secret. We need to have an open, public forum and dialogue to produce the best possible results, with a common goal and common mission to make us no longer energy dependent and make us much more energy efficient with a conservation ethic that places us in a position where we can provide the kind of energy and means that the people we are sworn to serve richly deserve.

I thank the gentleman again so much for his leadership in this area and I look forward as always to working with him on his agenda of livable communities and the great, great job that he has done in terms of bringing conservation to the forefront here in the United States Congress.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman sharing his insights and his kind words.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PALLONE. I wanted to briefly point out that although the comments I made earlier were primarily with regard to the President's proposal, President Bush and Vice President Cheney's proposals and what they are likely to come up with tomorrow from their task force in terms of a policy to address energy issues, that it is also true that for the last 6 years since the Republicans have been in the majority in this Congress, that they have conveniently forgotten, or failed really, to address what has now become an energy crisis.

And each year from 1995 on when President Clinton and the congress-

sional Democrats tried to present commonsense, balanced, both immediate and long-term solutions to the energy problems that existed then and were continuing to build, the Republicans blocked those efforts in the Congress every step of the way. If I could just mention a few, I think the most egregious was in 1999, I remember, I was here, when the Republican leaders, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) joined 36 other Republicans to introduce a bill that would have eliminated the Department of Energy altogether and the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

As I mentioned, President Bush still says that he does not want to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, but they would have abolished it completely. In the same year, the Republicans rejected an Energy Department proposal to buy 10 million barrels of oil when crude prices were only \$10 a barrel that would have allowed us to build up the SPR.

So they wanted to abolish it. They did not want to fill it. In addition to that, every year in those 6 years the President and congressional Democrats would propose budget initiatives that would help with energy efficiency and renewables. But between fiscal year 1996 and fiscal year 2001 the Republicans underfunded energy efficiency and renewable energy programs by \$1.4 billion below what President Clinton and congressional Democrats' funding requests were at the time.

We have seen essentially no effort to address conservation, no effort to address energy efficiency, alternative fuels, the list goes on. Next week in the Committee on Commerce which I sit on, we are going to have a full committee markup on a bill that is being brought by the congressional leadership in the Committee on Commerce, the Republican leadership in the Committee on Commerce called the Electricity Emergency Relief Act. This is sponsored by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Power. This bill, I mean, needless to say, is fundamentally flawed. It is not going to address the problems in California; and I just wanted to point out, this is from my colleague the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), who is a leading member, a more senior member of the Committee on Commerce, he cited four major flaws with the bill. Keep in mind this is the Republican answer to the California energy crisis.

First, it fails to address runaway wholesale electricity prices. The efforts by the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) of the Committee on Commerce, then in the subcommittee, next week in the full committee, to impose some sort of cap as the Democrats would like to see on wholesale electricity prices is not included in the

bill. The bill, the Republican bill, also interferes with California's actions to address the electricity crisis. It increases the State's dependence on the spot market. It inhibits the State's ability to acquire and operate transmission lines in California. It conflicts with California's innovative demand reduction programs. So it is actually hurting the State, making it difficult for the State to actually do what the State wants to do to improve the electricity situation.

It also, and I note that my colleague from Oregon has repeatedly noted the effort to break down environmental laws, this bill creates loopholes in the Nation's environmental laws. It opens up every national park and wilderness area to the construction of new power lines. It allows States to waive environmental requirements applicable to hydro-power projects. It authorizes extensive waivers of the Clean Air Act requirements for electricity generation. And lastly, of course, the bill fails to adequately address conservation.

I know that my colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), has repeatedly said how there has to be a conservation component in our energy policy. The Democrats have that. The Republicans do not. This bill does nothing to improve it. Tomorrow we are going to hear about the Bush-Cheney report and how great that is going to be. Next week we are going to hear about the Barton bill and how great that is going to be to solve the California problem. Neither one solves any of those problems. Unfortunately we continue to have Republican inaction.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. SHERMAN. The Vice President made some remarks recently that have become rather famous. He said conservation might be a personal virtue but it was not the basis, not a sufficient basis, for a national energy policy. I think we can only respond that degrading the environment and maximizing energy company prices might be good cash generation politics, but it is not the basis, not the sufficient basis, for a comprehensive energy policy.

I want to talk a little bit about how California is being hurt because we do not have rate regulation on the wholesale generation of electricity. Technically what is being called for is not price caps but technically what we are asking for is temporary cost-based price regulation, basically the same system that existed in this country for electric utilities, privately owned electric utilities for 100 years, when America went from a rural society to the world's only superpower.

Now, these lack of price regulations are responsible and will increasingly be responsible for blackouts in California. We are told by some economic theo-

rists, oh, if you could just increase the price of electricity, Californians would conserve and you would not need blackouts. These folks have not been schooled in the school of hard knocks that we are experiencing in California. You see, no matter how much Californians conserve, the owners, the robber barons, can still suppress supply even more so that they can charge huge amounts for each kilowatt while not having to pay for the fuel to generate very many kilowatts. So the absence of regulation reduces supply.

Higher prices will not reduce demand. As I pointed out earlier, California is now second, we are about to be first, in terms of energy conservation, electric energy conservation among all 50 States. And there is a real spirit in California to conserve electricity wherever we possibly can. Conservation is what we are doing already. Limits on wholesale prices will eliminate the incentive that these companies have to suppress production, to close their plants for maintenance, and will instead ensure that they generate electricity because they know they can only get a fair profit on each kilowatt that they generate.

Second, we are about to see prices paid by California consumers be roughly double what they are used to. Double what they paid just a year ago. But that does not fully convey to Californians the degree of this rip-off. You see, the electrons flowing to each California home, about two-thirds of them, are coming at a fair price. One-third are not coming at double a fair price, or triple a fair price. No, these unregulated producers are charging 6 or 10 times a fair price on average, and at peak times, or at times of particularly acute engineered shortages, they are charging 50 and 100 times a fair price per kilowatt. So if you are getting an electric bill that is only double what is fair, do not think that these few megacompanies are only earning double what is fair. They are earning 10 times what is fair.

The solution is in the White House. But I think the headline is clear: "President to California, Drop Dead." There is one possible California response and it comes not from the California Democrats. We have already responded. The onus is on California Republicans and Republicans from the other Western States. Four have had the courage to tell the White House that destroying our State is not acceptable and they have cosponsored the bill sponsored by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), a Republican from San Diego County, to provide these cost-based price regulations. We need every Republican from the Western States to cosponsor that bill. And if they do not do it this month, they are going to face their constituents next month and the month after. But it has to go beyond that because Presi-

dent Bush will simply veto a bill. He will veto a bill that requires fair prices in California.

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He would veto a bill that prevents a justified transfer of \$50 billion from the people of California to a few megacorporations, most of them based in Texas.

The only way to prevent that veto is to get every Republican from the Western States, starting with those in California, to come down to this floor and announce that they will not support any Presidential initiative, that they will vote "present" and not "yes" on every one of those Republican proposals, until we save our State.

I am calling on my colleagues from California, put your constituents above your contributors; put your State above your party. Come down to this floor tomorrow and say you are going to vote against every proposal. You do not have to vote against it. Just vote "present" on every proposal until the President signs the legislation we need to save California.

If you think that maybe we in California do not deserve any Federal legislation, then, for God's sake, let us pass a bill that gives California the right to regulate the wholesale price of electricity generated at plants located in California. If you do not believe the Federal Government should play a role, at least untie our hands. We need at least that, and we need California Republicans to stand up for our State.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman. Clearly he has identified a critical area where 12 percent of our Nation's population is facing something that surely we are all going to have to contend with.

What have we discussed here at this point this evening? Well, first and foremost, we have established that conservation may be a virtue. I think it is, but it certainly is an important part of an energy policy for this country, and we are arguing it ought to be part of the foundation. Without the conservation that was inspired in the mid-1970s and, sadly, to a certain extent rolled back during the Reagan years, without that energy conservation, the use in the United States of energy in the year 2000, if we had kept on the same line, would have been 40 percent higher and Americans would have spent \$260 billion more for energy. Conservation works.

But we have just barely scratched the surface of the potential for achieving more savings. If we had one of the popular SUVs that had an average of 40 miles per gallon over the next decade, it would save the equivalent of 50 billion barrels of oil, 15 times more than would be reclaimed from the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, if that is where you want to go.

We have been dealing with the facts surrounding the energy situation. We have heard about what the situation is in the State of California. We are in fact now building, and any reader of *The Wall Street Journal* this last week has learned that we are moving ahead without a Federal initiative, to build more generating capacity. More is on line; markets are in fact responding.

We have heard this myth somehow that people, for example, in California, or the "radical environmentalists," were at fault for not building up refining capacity in this country and talk about how there has not been a lot of new refineries built.

Well, the reason there have not been new refineries built is because the industry has been going through consolidation. We have more refinery capacity today, fewer refineries. And if you look at what the petroleum giants are doing, they are shedding refinery capacity because it is not profitable enough.

What measures up to the hundreds of percent or thousands of percent rate of return that can be extracted from some of the situations that we have had described on the floor today? It is not somehow the fault of the environmentalists, it is market forces that are at work.

We understand, and I have heard twice now the Vice President extolling the virtues of going back to nuclear energy. Interesting. I come from a State that shut down a nuclear plant. The private company that owned it shut it down earlier than its license would have required because it was not profitable.

It is true that over 20 percent of the generation currently comes from nuclear power, but there has not been a new nuclear power plant ordered in the United States in over 23 years. And it was not just in my State that they shut it down. The gentleman from New Jersey can testify that there was the same situation occurring there and in Maine, Illinois, and Connecticut, where people were backing away from nuclear energy.

We still do not have a safe place to store nuclear waste in this country. We have been tied in knots over that. Yet some want to go ahead and deal with more.

The assertion somehow that nuclear energy is the salvation, the silver bullet, that it does not provide pollution, well, excuse me. First of all, nuclear waste continues for a quarter of a million years or longer. Nuclear waste, when you are dealing with it, is not just nuclear energy; it is the very warm water that is generated. It pollutes the waterways.

The process of enriching uranium uses a substantial amount of electricity in and of itself that produces many of the same sort of traditional fossil fuel air pollutants. Nuclear energy is not a silver bullet.

We have heard some arguing that somehow the environmentalists have locked up all the land. We cannot have access. Wait a minute. Right now the oil and gas industry has access to huge tracts of BLM lands. Only 3.5 percent of the BLM land in Colorado is off limits to exploration; only 2 percent in Montana; only 2.5 percent in Wyoming; 4 percent in New Mexico. It simply is not true that there is not access.

It is interesting watching the little struggle between the President's brother and the people in California and Alaska who are concerned about offshore drilling, but there is still over 60 percent of the Nation's undiscovered economically recoverable oil and 80 percent of the economically recoverable gas that is located in areas that are accessible. There are opportunities for further exploration. It is the private sector that to this point has chosen not to take advantage of them.

I guess I will conclude my remarks before turning to the gentleman from New Jersey to wrap it up to just make one other point, that there are many opportunities now for low-income people to be able to reduce their energy costs over time.

We have talked about the lunacy of having a massive tax cut that is not going to benefit the vast majority of low- and moderate-income people, but somehow they are going to take this tax cut and pay it for higher energy costs. But if for a moment we can spend upwards of \$2 trillion over the next 11 years, is it not possible that Congress and this administration could design programs to help very low- and moderate-income people pay some of the higher costs through rebates or direct tax credits that go back to them, so they can afford to be more energy efficient, lower their electrical costs today, not tomorrow or 20 years from now, lower those costs today, save them money today, and have additional savings that will accrue to the broader community because we will not have to build an energy plant a week?

It seems to me that this is a simple, commonsense approach; that if we could get it to the floor, I am convinced an overwhelming majority of Republicans and Democrats would agree with the American public to put conservation, wise use, invest in American technology, do that first before we move ahead with things that simply they are opposed to. I think it makes good sense, and I hope that this Congress will listen to what we are being told by the American public.

With that, I will turn to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for the last word in our special order this evening.

Mr. PALLONE. I thank the gentleman. I do not mean to take the last word, but I just wanted to comment on what the gentleman said, because I

think what he pointed out is that the Democrats' energy policy is a well-rounded, commonsense approach.

We are saying that we want more production in those areas that are available to be done; to drill for oil, to drill for natural gas, in an environmentally sensitive way. It can be done. We are for more production. We are saying we want conservation. We want the use of more renewables. We want more energy efficiency. We have tax credits for energy efficiency, if you buy a car or do something to your home that is more energy efficient.

We basically are very well rounded in our approach in terms of the types of fossil fuels that could be used, and I for the life of me do not understand why we have to take this Bush-Cheney approach that just says drill, drill, drill, and nothing else. Even in our Democratic proposal, we have a supplement to the LIHEAP program for low-income individuals, because we recognize that they are going to need additional help.

If you think about what the Democrats have put forward, more production, more energy efficiency, more use of renewables, trying to provide direct payments to low-income individuals so they can pay for their rising costs, all these things are in there.

But we want this energy policy to be well rounded. We do not want it to just be limited to something that the oil companies want, which is to drill and drill and drill. There is no way that you can possibly look at what the Democrats have in mind and then look at what the President is proposing. The President's proposal is nothing more than a payback to the special interests, to the oil industry. We have seen that.

I know tomorrow it is going to be unveiled. We heard a lot about it, but I am waiting to see what happens, because, as the gentleman says, we want to be bipartisan, and we are hoping that maybe he will incorporate tomorrow some of the conservation and other things that we are talking about tonight. I doubt he will, but I hope he does, because I would like to see a responsible energy policy passed. I just do not see that coming from the White House so far.

With that, I thank my colleague for all he has done and continues to do on these issues.

DIABETES, A DEVASTATING PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANTOR). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, as we observe National Women's Health Week this week, I rise as the Cochair of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues to bring attention and highlight a disease that has